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Page 1: Full-Time Faculty Position Form

Q1

Please enter the following:

Department	**Engineering & Physical Sciences**
Position Title	**Full-Time Physics and Astronomy Faculty**

Q2

1a. Did you request a position last year (2024-2025)?

No

Q3

1b. If yes, and that position was funded, do you want this position ranked as well?

Respondent skipped this question

Q4

1c. Is there dedicated funding for the position that is not unrestricted general fund (i.e. categorical/special funded programs)

No

Page 2

Q5

2. Why is this position essential to your program and college?Please discuss the potential impact of this position on the department, college, district and/or region (Rubric Criterion 1, 3).(300 words or less)

This position is essential because the Physics program has experienced sustained, well-documented growth and instructional expansion that now exceed its full-time faculty capacity, creating a structural risk to student access, equity, and program continuity across STEM majors' pathways and high-impact general education science offerings. Physics functions as a required gateway for engineering, biology, chemistry, and computer science, serving a student population that is increasingly diverse, transfer-oriented, and enrollment-intensive (Program Review data, Spring 2016–Spring 2025).
Since 2020–21, combined Physics and Astronomy enrollments have grown by approximately 75%, increasing from roughly 900 students annually to over 1,600 (Spring 2021 vs. Spring 2025). During this same period, Physics FTES increased between 30–54% (2019–2025), while the number of full-time Physics faculty has remained fixed at three. This mismatch has produced a sustained load cushion of approximately 3.5 and a heavy reliance on part-time instruction to meet demand (Program staffing and load data, 2021–2025).

Importantly, this growth has not come at the expense of equity. Program review data show that expansion has coincided with measurable gains in access for historically marginalized students. Hispanic/Latino representation in Physics increased to approximately 30–32% (Spring 2023–Spring 2025), and participation by women has remained stable at 40–42% despite rapid enrollment growth (Spring 2024–Spring 2025). These trends reflect intentional, equity-minded instructional practices that have broadened access while maintaining strong outcomes.

At the same time, productivity metrics reveal both exceptional efficiency and unsustainable staffing strain. Physics consistently exceeds institutional benchmarks, with WSCH/FTEF ranging from 510–575 compared to a college baseline of 456, and fill rates of 85–115% compared to a 74% college baseline (2019–2025). Yet full-time instructional load accounts for only about 50% of total FTEF, signaling a structural under-allocation of full-time faculty relative to enrollment demand. The program is operating at maximum efficiency by overextending adjunct labor rather than through sustainable staffing, placing long-term instructional quality and recent equity gains at risk.

Physics supports multiple high-demand, mission-critical pathways, including STEM and engineering transfer majors (PHYC 201–203), life and health science majors (PHYC 130–131), and general education students through Physics 110 and Astronomy, which together serve as accessible, high-impact science options for a broad student population.

In addition, Physics faculty lead some of the college's most ambitious instructional initiatives, including expansion of in-person labs beyond pre-pandemic levels, development of HyFlex and POCR-certified courses, creation and maintenance of the only fully online calculus-based physics lab pathway in California, and completion of Zero Textbook Cost pathways for Physics 110 and the full majors' sequence. These efforts have expanded access, reduced financial barriers, and preserved transfer-level rigor, but they are labor-intensive and faculty-driven. Online lab design, inquiry-based curriculum development, articulation alignment, RSI compliance, and ZTC maintenance cannot be sustained through rotating adjunct assignments without risking quality, equity, or compliance.

Absent additional full-time capacity, the program has already been forced to limit section growth and scale back online offerings to preserve instructional integrity. Continued growth under current staffing levels will further constrain access to required Physics courses and GE science offerings, creating bottlenecks that disproportionately impact first-generation, working, and historically marginalized students and threaten the sustainability of the program's equity successes.

Q6

3. What are the racial and gender demographics of the faculty within your program? Outline your steps to ensure a recruitment of diverse candidates that reflect the mission, vision and values of the college. These steps could include: professional associations dedicated to the promotion of diversity in your content area (Rubric Criterion 1).(300 words or less)

The racial and gender composition of the Physics & Astronomy faculty reflects well-documented national patterns in physics, while also revealing a clear and measurable mismatch with the demographics of the students served. Nationally, women comprise approximately 20–25% of physics and astronomy faculty, and faculty from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups account for less than 15%, with representation lowest at the full-time level (National Science Foundation, 2023; American Institute of Physics, 2023). Within the department, women represent approximately 33% of full-time faculty and just under 30% of all instructional faculty, placing the program modestly above national norms but well below the college's student population (54% female). Faculty from historically marginalized racial and ethnic groups comprise approximately 25–30% of instructional faculty, compared to over 40% of the college's student population, with even higher representation among students enrolled in Physics, Astronomy, and Physics 110 (GE). These data demonstrate a persistent gap between faculty representation and student demographics, particularly at the full-time level.

This gap has direct equity implications in high-enrollment gateway and general education science courses, including Physics 110 and our Astronomy courses. Empirical research consistently shows that faculty visibility, representation, and sustained interaction are strongly associated with students' sense of belonging, persistence, and continuation in STEM fields, especially for women and students from historically marginalized groups (Seymour & Hewitt, 1997; Hurtado et al., 2011, 2012; Stout et al., 2011). While the adjunct faculty pool is more diverse, reliance on part-time staffing limits continuity in mentoring, curriculum leadership, and equity-driven instructional practices.

Student outcomes provide clear evidence of the effectiveness of equity-minded instructional practices, even when there is no full demographic alignment between faculty and students. Over the past decade, Physics enrollments increased from 32% female and 20% Hispanic/Latino in 2014 to 42% female and 30% Hispanic/Latino in 2024, while course success rates remained consistently high at 85–87%, exceeding college averages. This pattern demonstrates that expanded access, when paired with intentional and inclusive instructional design, has strengthened rather than diluted student achievement. Empirical research supports this finding. Studies in STEM education consistently show that equity-minded pedagogy, structured faculty–student interaction, and inclusive course design can expand access and improve persistence for historically marginalized students without reducing academic rigor or overall success rates (Seymour & Hewitt, 1997; Hurtado et al., 2011, 2012; Theobald et al., 2020).

At the same time, the divergence between student demographics and full-time faculty representation constitutes a structural equity gap. Research indicates that sustained, full-time faculty presence is the most effective mechanism for maintaining equity gains over time, supporting persistence in gateway courses, and institutionalizing inclusive instructional practices in STEM programs (Hurtado et al., 2012). Accordingly, a full-time hire represents the most direct and durable strategy for aligning faculty representation with the students served and for sustaining equity-driven instructional practices across science and engineering majors' courses and general education science offerings.

Hiring Plan
To build on documented equity gains and address this structural need, the department will implement the following evidence-based, equity-centered recruitment, hiring, and retention strategies, aligned with the college's mission, vision, and values.

Broaden recruitment pipelines: The department will advertise positions through equity-centered professional organizations, including SACNAS, NSBP, AWIS, Women in Physics, and the AAPT Diversity Committee, and will use diversity-focused academic job boards such as INSIGHT Into Diversity, DiversityJobs, and HigherEdJobs diversity listings. Research shows that intentional outreach beyond traditional disciplinary networks significantly broadens applicant pools and increases the likelihood of attracting candidates from historically underrepresented groups (Smith et al., 2004; Turner et al., 2008). The department will also actively recruit through UC and CSU graduate programs serving diverse student populations, an approach shown to improve faculty diversity outcomes in STEM fields (Smith et al., 2004).

Embed equity into the hiring process: All hiring committee members will complete required EEO and equity-minded hiring training, including EEO Representative Training. Equity-minded hiring research demonstrates that structured processes, shared evaluative criteria, and bias-aware training reduce inequitable screening practices and improve hiring outcomes (Bensimon, 2007; Smith et al., 2004). Interview questions will explicitly assess candidates' experience with inclusive pedagogy, mentoring philosophy, and equity-minded curriculum design in lab-intensive STEM courses, practices shown to better identify candidates prepared to support diverse student populations (Turner et al., 2008).

Support retention and long-term success: To ensure retention and effectiveness, new hires will be enrolled in EMTLI and SEED, participate in structured peer and AFT mentorship, and receive intentional onboarding into curriculum coordination, service, and program leadership. Research indicates that comprehensive onboarding, mentoring, and faculty development are critical for retaining diverse faculty and sustaining inclusive teaching practices over time (Beach et al., 2016; Turner et al., 2008).

Together, these strategies move beyond recruitment alone to support long-term retention, instructional excellence, and equity. This position will strengthen a program that has already demonstrated measurable equity progress while addressing remaining gaps through sustained, full-time faculty leadership.

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Q7

4. Please describe your planned onboarding process to support the new hires inclusion into community. Please share if there are any resources or collaboration that would assist. (Ex: AFT mentorship, THRIVE, Tenure Review, EMTLI, Communities of Practices, etc.) (Rubric Criterion 4: Support of Strategic Plan) Increase equitable access (enrollment) Eliminate equity gaps in course success (passing grade in class) Increase persistence eliminate equity gaps (re-enrolling the subsequent semester or year) Increase completion and eliminate equity gaps (graduating with a degree/certificate, or transferring) Increase hiring and retention of diverse employees to reflect the students and communities we serve (300 words or less)

The department will implement a scaffolded, evidence-based onboarding and mentoring model that combines formal institutional structures with intentional, informal department-level support. This model is designed to support the new hire's inclusion into the college community while directly advancing the college's strategic priorities related to equitable access, student success, persistence, completion, and the hiring and retention of diverse faculty.

Scaffolded mentoring, tenure support, and accountability
New hires will participate in the standard Tenure Review process and AFT mentorship, providing structured guidance in teaching, service, and professional growth. These formal supports will be intentionally scaffolded with informal department-level mentoring, including:
1. Regular one-on-one, informal (and hopefully fun) check-ins with an experienced faculty member,
2. Ongoing peer mentoring focused on teaching, curriculum, and workload balance, and
3. Frequent, informal check-ins embedded in department meetings and collaborative work.

Research shows that multi-layered mentoring models that integrate formal evaluation with informal relational support are more effective in supporting faculty success, retention, and professional socialization, particularly for faculty in STEM and faculty from historically marginalized groups (Turner et al., 2008; Beach et al., 2016).

Progress on onboarding, mentoring, and integration will be revisited annually through the tenure review process and department planning discussions, ensuring alignment with student equity and success outcomes and providing a mechanism for continuous improvement.

Equity-centered professional development and communities of practice
New faculty will be encouraged to enroll in the Equity-Minded Teaching and Learning Institute (EMTLI) and participate in the department's SEED Community of Practice. Participation in these structured communities of practice supports reflective teaching, inclusive pedagogy, and sustained improvement in student outcomes, directly advancing the college's goals to eliminate equity gaps in course success and persistence (Wenger, 1998; Beach et al., 2016).

Instructional and curricular integration
The department emphasizes collaborative curriculum development and shared instructional resources, particularly in lab-intensive and multi-modal Physics and GE science courses. New hires will receive structured support in:
1. Inquiry-based lab design,
2. Articulation and transfer alignment,
3. Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) use and maintenance, and
4. Online, hybrid, and in-person Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) best practices.

Early instructional integration enables new faculty to contribute effectively to high-enrollment gateway and general education courses, directly supporting equitable access, persistence, and completion for STEM majors and GE students (Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2005).

Student support and cross-campus collaboration
Onboarding will include early and intentional collaboration with STEM counseling, tutoring, and learning support services. Coordinated faculty–student support structures are associated with improved persistence and reduced equity gaps in gateway STEM courses (Hurtado et al., 2011).

(Hurtado et al., 2011).

Long-term inclusion, leadership development, and retention

Beyond initial onboarding, the department will intentionally integrate the new hire into curriculum coordination, service, and program leadership, ensuring meaningful participation in shared governance and long-term program development. Research indicates that early inclusion in departmental leadership and decision-making strengthens faculty sense of belonging and improves retention, particularly for faculty from historically underrepresented groups (Turner et al., 2008).

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Q8

5. How will this position improve student learning and achievement, and close equity gaps in access and outcomes in your program? What steps are you taking to close equity gaps in access and outcome, for example: (Rubric Criterion 2: Program Student Achievement and Potential Growth) modify curriculum to reflect the college's diverse student population close equity gaps ensuring equitable access to courses that have pre-requisites removing barriers for students, especially those from historically marginalized groups adopt/create no cost/low-cost textbooks and course materials (300 words or less)

This position will improve student learning and achievement by sustaining and scaling equity-minded instructional practices that are already producing strong outcomes in Physics, while addressing persistent equity gaps in gateway courses, online sections, and high-demand sequences. Physics consistently achieves 85–87% course success and 90–95% retention, exceeding college averages. However, equity gaps remain most visible in gateway and first-semester courses (PHYC 110, 130, and 201), particularly in online sections, where success rates average 15–20 percentage points lower than in-person courses. These gaps disproportionately affect first-generation, low-income, and historically marginalized students. Research shows that intentional faculty–student interaction, inclusive course design, and coordinated instructional support are strongly associated with improved persistence and reduced equity gaps in STEM (Hurtado et al., 2011, 2012). Additional full-time faculty capacity enables these evidence-based interventions through curriculum alignment, inquiry-based lab redesign, embedded academic support, and consistent instructional oversight.

The position is critical to ensuring equitable access to prerequisite courses, particularly in the Physics majors' sequence (PHYC 201–203). Stable full-time staffing reduces bottlenecks, improves course scheduling, and supports predictable pathways to transfer, directly advancing persistence and completion.
This position also sustains and strengthens Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) pathways across Physics 110 and the full Physics majors' sequence, removing a significant financial barrier for students. Studies show that no-cost course materials improve enrollment intensity, course completion, and equity in outcomes, particularly for students from historically marginalized backgrounds (Colvard et al., 2018). ZTC materials require continuous updating for accessibility, articulation, and curricular alignment—work that cannot be sustained without full-time faculty leadership.

Finally, the position supports equitable, high-quality online instruction by leading Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) compliance, aligning online and in-person lab experiences, and redesigning online labs to promote engagement and academic integrity. Evidence from large-scale STEM studies demonstrates that active and inclusive instructional practices narrow achievement gaps without reducing academic rigor (Theobald et al., 2020).

References

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Q9

6. Has there been or is there evidence to demonstrate that there will be an increase in student demand for your programs and/or services? How are students being adversely impacted without this position? Please discuss supporting data from recent semesters. For example, enrollment trends, waitlist pressures, or wait time for appointments and support services, students served, etc. as they apply to this position. (Rubric Criterion 2)(300 words or less)

Program review data show sustained and increasing student demand for Physics that now exceeds current staffing capacity. Since 2020–21, annual enrollments in Physics and Astronomy have grown from approximately 900 to over 1,600 students (≈75% increase), while Physics FTES increased 30–54% since 2019. During this same period, the number of full-time faculty has remained unchanged.

Program review data show sustained and increasing student demand for Physics and Astronomy that now exceeds current staffing capacity. Since 2020–21, annual enrollments have grown from approximately 900 to over 1,600 students (≈75% increase), while Physics FTES increased 30–54% since 2019. During this same period, the number of full-time faculty has remained unchanged.

Physics functions as a cross-disciplinary chokepoint, required across nearly all STEM pathways, including engineering, biology, chemistry, computer science, and related transfer majors. As a result, limited access produces immediate delays in persistence, degree completion, and transfer. Astronomy, as a high-demand GE science option, serves as an entry point for many students and supports broad access to science coursework.

The department is already turning away students, particularly in online Physics, where sections routinely fill and waitlists remain full. Demand for online and hybrid formats is strong, especially among working students and those with caregiving or transportation barriers. However, the department is unwilling to expand online offerings without first redesigning course structures and providing appropriate faculty training to ensure quality, equity, and compliance. At present, the department does not have the staffing capacity to complete this work while maintaining existing in-person offerings.

Physics and Astronomy also play a significant role in recruiting and retaining students at Cuyamaca. Informal in-class student surveys and discussions indicate that many students (particularly in calculus-based Physics) were previously unaware of Cuyamaca College or believed it to be separate from Grossmont College. Counselors at Grossmont and Southwestern Colleges regularly refer students to Cuyamaca for Physics due to the program’s equity-minded instruction and high-quality labs. Many of these students subsequently enroll in additional coursework at Cuyamaca.

Absent this position, the program will continue to limit access despite documented demand, constraining student success across STEM pathways. Approval of this position is necessary to align staffing with demand and to support responsible, high-quality expansion that benefits both students and the college.

Q10

7. Which program review goal(s) is this request supporting? Please state how the position will help advance the specific goal(s). Please explain how this position would support historically marginalized groups? (Rubric Criterion 3: Critical Need - Critical to the Program/and Institution)Examples may include the following: Issues with Federal or State Mandates Replacement for Recent Retirement or Vacancy Specialty Areas within Discipline/Service Area results in difficulty in finding part-time faculty Required for Program, Courses, or Specific Service to Continue Ranking within division (per division dean feedback) Supporting students (300 words or less)

This request directly supports multiple active program review goals and addresses a critical instructional and institutional need. Physics and Astronomy have experienced sustained enrollment growth and expanded instructional scope that now exceed existing full-time staffing capacity, creating risk to program continuity, instructional quality, and equitable student access.

High-quality instruction across modalities
The program review identifies the need to maintain rigorous, equitable instruction across in-person, online, and hybrid Physics and Astronomy. Online and hybrid lab-based science courses require significantly more faculty oversight to ensure academic integrity, accessibility, and compliance with Regular and Substantive Interaction requirements. Without additional full-time faculty capacity, the program has already been forced to limit online offerings despite strong demand. This position is required to responsibly sustain and expand these modalities.

Alignment of labs in the Physics majors' sequence
The Physics majors' sequence, PHYC 201 through 203, is required across engineering, biology, chemistry, and computer science pathways and functions as a cross-disciplinary chokepoint. Program review data identify the need for consistent lab design, sequencing, and assessment across sections and modalities. This work requires stable full-time leadership and cannot be maintained through rotating adjunct assignments.

Expansion and maintenance of Zero Textbook Cost pathways
The program has established Zero Textbook Cost pathways for Physics 110 and the full majors' sequence, removing a significant financial barrier for students. Program review findings show that ZTC materials require continuous updates for accessibility, articulation, and curricular alignment. This work is not sustainable without dedicated full-time faculty leadership.

Support for historically marginalized students in gateway courses
Equity gaps remain most visible in gateway Physics courses, particularly in online sections that disproportionately serve first-generation, low-income, and working students. This position enables coordinated, equity-minded interventions such as inquiry-based lab redesign, aligned assessments, and embedded academic support, all identified in the program review as necessary to improve persistence and completion.

Q11

8. Is this position new or a replacement? Please explain. (Rubric Criterion 3)(100 words or less)

This is a new position, not a replacement. Physics enrollments and instructional responsibilities have increased substantially while the number of full-time faculty has remained unchanged. This position reflects program growth and expanded instructional complexity, not faculty turnover.

Q12

9. Which strategic priority/priorities is this request supporting? Please state how the position will help advance the specific priority/priorities and the College's mission, vision and values. Note: the more goals addressed the stronger the request. (Rubric Criterion 4: Support of Strategic Plan) Increase equitable access (enrollment) Eliminate equity gaps in course success (passing grade in class) Increase persistence eliminate equity gaps (re-enrolling the subsequent semester or year) Increase completion and eliminate equity gaps (graduating with a degree/certificate, or transferring) Increase hiring and retention of diverse employees to reflect the students and communities we serve (300 words or less)

This position directly advances all five College strategic priorities and strongly aligns with the College's mission, vision, and values by sustaining equitable access to high-demand Physics pathways, supporting student success across STEM disciplines, and strengthening long-term institutional capacity. Astronomy is included where it expands access and supports general education goals.

Increase equitable access (enrollment)
Physics is a required course across nearly all STEM pathways, including engineering, biology, chemistry, and computer science, making it a critical access point for student enrollment and progression. This position sustains and responsibly expands in-person, online, and hybrid Physics offerings that serve local and statewide students, particularly working students, caregivers, and those facing transportation or geographic barriers. Astronomy, as a high-demand general education science option, further broadens access for non-STEM students and first-time college students.

Eliminate equity gaps in course success
Equity gaps are most pronounced in gateway and first-semester Physics courses, especially in online sections that disproportionately enroll first-generation and historically marginalized students. This position enables consistent, equity-minded instructional leadership, including curriculum alignment, inquiry-based lab redesign, and coordinated faculty oversight across sections and modalities. These efforts directly address disparities in course success.
Increase persistence and eliminate equity gaps in re-enrollment
Because Physics courses are sequenced and prerequisite-driven, limited access creates immediate barriers to persistence. Stable full-time staffing improves scheduling predictability, reduces bottlenecks, and supports continuous enrollment in STEM pathways. Astronomy supports persistence by providing accessible, high-success GE science courses that help students remain enrolled and progress toward completion.

Increase completion and eliminate equity gaps in degree and transfer outcomes
This position supports timely degree completion and transfer by maintaining Zero Textbook Cost Physics pathways, aligning coursework with transfer requirements, and preventing delays caused by limited access to required courses. These impacts are especially significant for low-income students and students balancing employment or caregiving responsibilities.

Increase hiring and retention of diverse employees
Physics remains a discipline with a history of underrepresentation. This position provides an opportunity to diversify the faculty while supporting retention through structured onboarding, mentoring, and equity-focused professional development. Sustained full-time capacity is essential to aligning faculty representation with the students served.

Q13

10. Please confirm that you have discussed this faculty position request with the Division Dean and that you understand that Division Deans will be providing feedback to help inform the prioritization process.

Yes, I have discussed this position request with the Chair of the Department

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Q14

If you would like to attach data to support your request in light of the rubric criteria, please upload a PDF, Word, or image file using the button below.

Respondent skipped this question